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Information on Reichsbahn Signals and Safety

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## INFORMATION ON REICHSBAHN SIGNALS AND SAFETY

[A study of a group of operational directives of all divisions of the Reichsbahn Directorate Berlin between 1947 and 1951 yielded the following information:]

An operational directive, dated 25 August 1948, issued by the Reichsbahn Division Berlin 1 (Rba Bln 1), advised all offices concerned that beginning on 1 September 1948 the intra-urban railroad line (S-Bahn) Berlin-Hoppegarten would be extended to Fredersdorf. The line between Hoppegarten and Fredersdorf was described as single track and trains were announced to operate in shuttle traffic between these two station.

The signals to be operated on this sector ~~were~~ described as follows:

## Direction

Hoppegarten-Strausberg

at kilometer point (km) 16.260,  
home signal M<sup>1</sup> to Hoppegarten  
track 5

km 16.816, home signal W<sup>1</sup> from  
Hoppegarten track 4

km 21.940, home signal L<sup>2</sup> to  
Fredersdorf track 15

km 22.730, home signal N<sup>1</sup> from  
Fredersdorf track 16

Strausberg-Hoppegarten

km 23.169, home signal O<sup>1</sup> with K<sup>5</sup>  
marker [indicating permanent speed  
limitation] to Fredersdorf track 16

km 22.462, home signal M from Fred-  
ersdorf track 15

km 17.300, home signal X<sup>1</sup> to Hoppe-  
garten track 4

km 16.570, home signal N from Hoppe-  
garten track 5

[No explanation of these signal designations has been found, they are believed to be individual designations rather than designations of a certain type of signal]

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Scanning of operational directives of Rba's Bln 1, 2, and 3 indicates that in many cases line control is effected by telephonic request for permission to dispatch a train (Anbieten), granting of the request (Annehmen), report of train dispatch (Abmelden), and acknowledgment that the train has arrived (Zurueckmelden). A typical example is the following extract from operational directive no 47 of Rba Berlin 1, dated 10 Nov 50:

"Trains are to be offered, accepted, and acknowledged by the block stations. After line blocking has been established, the acknowledgment will be replaced by blocking the block passed. Until installation of teletype machines these train reports may be given by telephone."

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Reichsbahn Division Berlin 1 (Rba Bln 1) issued an operational directive (no 49) on 15 November 1950 and another one (no 6) on 12 February 1951, both dealing with construction work on a temporary bridge over an Autobahn between kilometer points 27.96 and 27.76 (200 meters between the Fangschleuse and Erkner stations) of the Frankfurt/Oder-Berlin track of the Berlin-Frankfurt/Oder line. This line, according to ~~the~~ appended sketches, is double track at this point. During construction, the Frankfurt/Oder-Berlin track was blocked continuously for three days. The directives gave orders regarding the train sequence at the construction site, citing train designations (by letters and numerals) and the locations where the individual trains were to wait for the passage of another train. The directive of November 1950 lists 26 different trains, while the directive of February 1951 lists 25 trains. These figures do not include "special trains" [presumably unscheduled trains].

Thus, it would appear, that under normal operating conditions in 1950/51 a total of 25-26 scheduled trains passed this point of the Berlin-Frankfurt/Oder railroad line in both directions during a 24-hour period.

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A service directive of Reichsbahn Division Berlin 2 (Rba Bln 2) of 24 April 1947 announced the forthcoming opening of a new single-track connecting curve between Gruenau and the new Adlergestell junction (at kilometer point 20.805 of the Berlin Outer Freight Belt). Under the heading "Safety Installations" the directive stated that for the time being no line blocking existed in either direction. A signal and switch control tower will be constructed. The following home signals exist:

signal A with one blade, controls runs from Altglienicke to Eichgestell
" B " two blades, " " " Gruenau " "
" C " one blade, " " " Eichgestell " Altglienicke
" C " two blades, " " " " " Gruenau.

[No explanation of these signal designations has been found.]

2# { For the time being the signals A and B will be operated manually right at the location of the signal. Signal C will be remote-controlled. The distance between the home signals and the distant signals is 700 meters.

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The distance of 700 meters between distant and home signals as well as the description of home signals with one and two blades is repeated several times throughout the document. [The distance between distant and home signal is 700 or 1,000 meters for mainlines, 400 or 700 meters for secondary lines (A. Neumann, Die Signale und Kennzeichen der Deutschen Reichsbahn - The signals and markers of the German Reichsbahn - Halle, 1950).]

Operational directive no 307 of Rba Bln 3, dated 10 April 1951, indicates that in 14 instances on seven different stations along the main track of the Berlin-Halle line the distance between a signal and the next switch is 50 meters.

A service directive of Rba Bln 4, dated 14 March 1949, indicates the existence of an interlocking system. After mentioning several signals at stations Caputh-Geltow, the directive states "These signals are fully interlocked with blocking and switch operations." The same directive goes on to say about several distant signals: "None of the newly installed distant signals has as yet been connected with the signal and switch control towers. For the time being no line blocking exists as yet in either direction. All switches in ... are still independent of the signals."

In operational Directive No 617, dated 15 July 1948, the Reichsbahn Division Berlin 6 (Rba Bln 6) announced the forthcoming conversion of a signal and switch control tower at station Ngb [unidentified. Possibly Gesundbrunnen.] from mechanical to electrical operation (electric signal & switch control installation type 1912).

Absence of radio communication between locomotive cab and caboose on freight trains seems to be indicated in an operational directive of the Reichsbahn Division Berlin 7 (Rba Bln 7) which comprises the Frankfurt/Oder area. The directive, dated 8 August 1949, deals with switching operations for freight trains over the track connecting the Werbig freight and passenger stations. It states: "When a train is pushed, it is essential that the head of the train is manned by a lookout. ... When a train is pushed and depending

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on the length of the train, the assistant station master ... has to appoint a second member of the train crew to act as relay man for orders."

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In a registered letter, dated 21 March 1949, to all offices having a copy of the Appendix to Train Service Regulations (AzFV) of the Reichsbahn Directorate Dresden, the Reichsbahn Directorate Berlin advised of the following corrections to the appendix: Speed limit in the direction from Goerlitz to Dresden-Neustadt, along the entire section, is 80 kilometers per hour; in the opposite direction it is 60 km/h between Dresden-Neustadt and Klotzsche and 80 km/h between Klotzsche and Goerlitz.

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